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ECNS 217X.01: Issues in Economic Development

Jeffrey T. Bookwalter

University of Montana - Missoula, jeffrey.bookwalter@umontana.edu

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Economics 217 – Issues in Economic Development

Professor Jeff Bookwalter

Fall 2016 – MWF 12:00 – 12:50, LA 138

Office and email: LA 407

jeff.bookwalter@mso.umt.edu

Office Hours: TTH 10:15-11:00, W 1:30 – 2:30. If those times are not convenient, drop by or make an appointment.

Texts and course materials: Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion* (BB)
Steven Radelet, *The Great Surge* (GS)
The State of Native Nations (SNN)

Additional course materials and readings available on Moodle:

General Description: This course has several objectives. First, the course explores the theory, practice and evaluation of economic development in the context of both low-income countries and Native American reservations. Most of the semester will be dedicated to covering a wide variety of these globalization and economic development issues. Second, this course helps develop your research and writing skills using economic development as the topic. As such, improving as writers is a significant goal of the course. You will have many opportunities to think and write about economic development issues. As you all know, courses are dull when no one other than the instructor has read the material and has anything to contribute. Read all materials before class and come ready to participate.

Graded Assignments: Each student must attend (and write up a one page synopsis and response to) three relevant events related to economic development. These activities might include approved brown-bag discussions, evening lectures, films and others. I will keep you informed of the relevant events and their dates as they are scheduled. Please let me know if you come across things that seem relevant and I can announce those as well. You may earn a small amount of extra credit for any additional events.

This course will have several graded assignments, ranging from short papers on the readings, to pop quizzes, to current event summaries, presentations and other things. They will be announced in class and you will usually have a couple of days to complete them. These and the event write-ups will make up 15 percent of your course grade. The lowest score will be dropped.

I use participation and class engagement as a tie-breaker when you are on the border between two grades.

Finally, in small groups, students will formulate and write a 15-22 page research paper. Please see the paper guidelines below for a full description of the process.

Email List and Moodle: Each student at UM is automatically assigned an email address usually in the following format: firstname.lastname@umontana.edu. I will use these email addresses regularly to send out current events readings, make class announcements, and for others things as needs arise. There is a course Moodle page for readings, grades and other things.

Exams: There will be one midterm and one final exam, worth 25 and 30 percent of your course grade, respectively. Each will be a mix of short answer and essay questions. Many discussions and topics are not found in the texts, so it is important to attend class. **Except for documented emergencies and official university excused absences, make-up exams are not given.** The exam dates are:

First Midterm:	Friday, October 21
Final Exam:	Thursday, December 15th, 8:00 – 10:00

Grading:

Graded Assignments, Presentations and Participation	15 percent
Midterm I	25 percent
Final Exam	30 percent
Paper	<u>30 percent</u>
Total	100 percent

Students with Disabilities: This course is accessible to and usable by otherwise qualified students with disabilities. To request reasonable program modifications, please consult with the instructor. Disability Services for Students will assist the instructor and student in the modification process. For more information, visit the Disability Services website at <http://www.umd.edu/disability>.

A Few Course Notes: A number of years ago, an exam cheating problem ruined my semester. A few years ago a research paper plagiarism problem ruined my semester. Since then, I have reluctantly adopted a zero tolerance policy for cheating. If you cheat and I catch you, you will fail the class and face University sanctions. Please don't cheat. It is surprisingly easy to detect plagiarism in research papers. You can find details in the UM Student Conduct Code here: http://www.umd.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php

Texting, emailing, and whispered phone conversations are distracting to others and a waste of your class time. If those activities are your priority, don't come to class.

Economics 217 – Paper Guidelines

General Comments: Economics 217 includes a significant amount of writing, and equally important, a significant amount of editing and rewriting. One of the reasons these writing assignments are required is to help you improve your writing skills. Grammar, spelling and style matter. Your grade will suffer if you turn in sloppy, poorly written work.

The course writing assignments will be evaluated for content, style, grammar, and readability in a structured review process. At least two classmates and the instructor will evaluate the paper and provide written comments. The final paper grade is based both on the quality of the paper and the incorporation of previous reviewer comments.

Getting started: Suppose the new head of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) needs to get up to speed on some countries she hasn't visited. Students will be randomly assigned to small groups, and by September 19th, each group will choose one country to focus on. Choose one of the countries classified by the UNDP as "Low" or "Medium" Human Development. No two groups can choose the same country. You can find those countries listed in Table 1 of the Human Development Report Tables on the course Moodle page.

Writing Assignments on the way to the final paper.

Country Background, Due October 10th: Discover some of the important economic, political, social and geographical features of the country. You don't have enough time or space to cover everything in the list below. Be strategic in your focus. (3-5 double-spaced pages)

- What is the current economic situation and what are the important economic sectors and activities?
 - What type of governance does the country have (democratic v. authoritarian, honest v. corrupt, effective v. inept, etc)?
 - What are the important geographical characteristics and how do these affect its current situation and prospects? Don't forget to talk about its neighbors if they are important.
 - Make explicit reference to and use some of the theoretical perspectives we've developed in class.
- Major development issues and relevant literature review, Due October 31st:
 - This section of your paper should discuss the principle barriers to economic development in your country. In addition, it should survey the relevant literature and discuss the individual issues.
 - Better papers will be able to talk broadly about the barriers and how they specifically apply to your country. (5-7 double spaced pages)
 - Complete Rough Draft, Due November 28th. This should integrate the two papers that came before, plus the following:
 - Introduction: This section should discuss the topic and include a clearly defined statement of your thesis. (1-2 double-spaced pages.)

- Policy Analysis: choose one or two of the principle barriers to development and analyze their causes, consequences and some potential solutions. Make recommendations to the head of USAID. (4-8 double-spaced pages).
- Conclusion: The conclusion of the paper needs to restate the major issues and summarize the arguments made in presenting your case. (1-2 double spaced pages)

Presentations: Each of the three times your group completes a section of the research paper, groups will make a brief (5-10 minute) presentation to the class.

Rough Draft and Reviews: On November 28th you will turn in a rough draft of your paper. It should be an almost complete version of the paper. Two fellow students and the instructor will review these drafts. The final product needs to address criticisms and suggestions for improvement. Reviews are due back to groups on December 2nd.

Final Draft: The final version of the paper is due Wednesday, December 7th. Late papers lose points. The text of the final paper (not including graphs, charts, tables, etc) should be 15 to 22 pages, double-spaced, in a reasonable font size. Please do not put them in binders or folders.

Peer Evaluation: Group projects are sometimes tricky. Some members have high standards, others less so. Some members work best with close direction, others with lots of autonomy. To maximize the likelihood of both a good project and a satisfying experience for all, you need to learn how to clearly communicate your needs and expectations. I will provide a little outside incentive for groups to work on this. At the completion of the project, each group member will complete a self and peer evaluation form. I will weight your individual project grade by the assessment of your peers.

Country Choice and Background Paper	20 percent
Major development challenges and literature review	20 percent
Policy Analysis and Rough Draft	30 percent
Final Draft	30 percent

Important Paper Dates:

September 19 th	Country choices due. Class meets in Mansfield Library computer lab. We will explore sources of data and information on the internet.
October 10 th	Country background paper due
October 31 st	Development challenges and literature review due
November 28 th	Complete rough draft, including introduction, conclusion and policy analysis, due
December 2 nd	Return the rough drafts you evaluated to the authors, and bring two copies of the each completed evaluation form to class; one for me, one for the author.
December 7 th	Final draft of project due at the beginning of class. Please do not put them in folders or binders.